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LETTER

To a NEWLY ELECTED

Member of Parliament ;

CONCERNING

HIS BEHAVIOUR there, about

Occasional Conformity, &c.

These Evil Councillours take care to raise none to any Ecclesiastical Dignities, but Persons that have Zeal for the *Protestant Religion*, and that NOW hide their Unconcernedness for it, under the specious Pretence of MODERATION. — Such would not thus pre-engage themselves, were they out of all Employments ; and others who were put into those Engagements, were put in their Places. *The Prince of Orange's Declaration upon his landing in England, 1688.*

L O N D O N,

and sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster. 1705.

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LETTER

TO A

Member of the New Parliament, &c.

S I R,

I know not well, which I should congratulate most, either your Electors for choosing you, or your self for being chosen. But I am satisfied, that it is happy for you both, that you are made their Representative, with whom they may safely trust the concerns of their Burrough, and to whose management all good Men will gladly commit the Interest of the Nation. And now that you are Chosen, I hope you will not take it ill, if I make use of that liberty, which our antient Friendship seems to allow. I am not so Ignorant either of your natural and acquired Accomplishments, or of my own Defects, as to take upon me to be your Director; for the highest of my ambition is to be your Remembrancer. It is not Improbable but you have already resolved upon most, if not all, the things, which I shall propose to you; and then I hope you will permit

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me to speak my thoughts; because many times wise people are not displeased at their having their sentiments confirmed by persons of much meaner capacity than Their own.

1. Let me beg of you to be zealous in the behalf of Religion; and shew your self as careful to be truly pious, as others are to be thought so. If you look abroad you cannot fail of meeting with great Numbers of People, whose Religion hath nothing else that looks like an Excellency, but that it is to be defined by Negatives, being of no particular perswasion, but Enemies to all. And these you may be sure are very moderately virtuous and never pay more than an *Occasional Conformity* to Gods Laws. We are most certainly in a very deplorable condition, have contributed too much towards the ruining of our Countrey by personal and national Sins, and in direct opposition to our Prayers, have done all we could towards the maintenance of Wickedness and Vice, and the suppressing true Religion and Vertue. And it is very easie to foresee the natural Effect of our unbelief and such Practices as are suitable thereto. When therefore anything shall be proposed in your House wherein Gods Honour shall be concerned, let no worldly consideration divert you from promoting it with the utmost vigour and fidelity. And since her Majesty hath thought fit to honour you with a Commission for the peace, when you return into the Countrey, be as warm in the Execution of the Laws as you was in framing them; and let the boldest sinner know, that you do not bear the Sword of Justice in vain. Though you cannot reach his heart, yet you may deal well enough with him, if you make his Body or his Pocket pay for his Enormities. And by thus correcting Vice, you will at the same time Establish the Church and suppress Wickedness together

gether. And here I cannot forbear recommending the Church to your particular care, that you would seriously try to heart her unfortunate circumstances, how she is attacked on both hands; by the *Papists*, for her departure from their Church, and by our Sectaries for adhering too closely to it. Thus is she baited both by the Bulls of *Rome* and *Geneva*. But I confess in this contradictory charge of her equally unjust and malicious Adversaries, She hath this to comfort her, that all Impartial Considerers must needs see that she is the middle Vertue, when each Extream accuseth her of being guilty of the other Extream. Another Misfortune which may serve to excite your pity towards her, is the Melancholy consideration of her having been abandoned by many who would formerly have accounted it an unpardonable affront to have been suspected of such a desertion. Nay there are those who enjoy her Honours and Revenues, and yet speak against her, and it may be think that they are not well enough pay'd for those their Practices, in having no more preferment than what they might justly challenge for their open railing; and their secret treachery remains still unrewarded. And now she turns to you as our great Master and Saviour did to his Disciples in the time of his Distress, *will ye also go away?* And as a further incitement to pity towards the Church, I must desire you to consider the fierceness of her Enemies in *Scotland*, who are so far from parting with the least tittle that relates to Presbytery, that they will not endure to have any thing propos'd that may tend to its prejudice. Do but weigh their Zeal and the effects of that Zeal; how from pleading for Toleration for themselves they are come to that height of Insolence and Barbarity, as to deny it to the Prelatical Party; and (such is their Moderation) have made it Treason to speak or write in defence of Episcopacy. And

think you, that they will not do as much here if it shall ever lye in their power? The difference of air will make no alteration in them; but Kirk-Men will be Kirk-Men, let them go were they will. Have we their Fellow-subjects any reason to expect a kind treatment from them, when they despise their Sovereign's Authority, and that openly to? For some of their Burrough's declared on the Market-Crosses, *May the 20th. 1703.* That they renounced *Anne Princess of Denmark* from being their Queen, unless she would abolish and root out Episcopacy in *England*. Now it had been sufficiently vile, if they had discouraged thus amongst themselves in private, but so publicly to avow their Plots and Conspiracies, is intolerable. For it is a letting Her know their will and pleasure before hand, that if She will extirpate Episcopacy, She may have them for Her friends; but if She be resolved to support it, be it at Her peril. This is the style, in which Presbyterians make their addresses to Majesty, and very insolently approach the Throne with Threats. Now if her Majesty shall presume to act contrary to these Declarations, and fancy that She hath Authority over the Saints; it is no hard matter for us to guess what Usage She would have from them, if success should answer their Wishes and Designs, especially considering how Inhumanly they dealt by Her Grand Father, and are still prosecuting him with their anniversary Savageness, making the day of his Martyrdom a Solemn Festival, when unsufferable Malice and Insolence are made the fauce to Murder and Treason; Though that no less pious than unfortunate Prince hath been dead so many years, yet do these vile Wretches still keep their hatred alive, and do every Thirtieth of *January* revel in his Blood. They sport themselves with that detestable Fact, for which all Nations that have heard of it abho-

abhor us: And yet with them there is no such proper way of keeping that day, as by black and insipid Rhimes, and therefore the Drunkards make Songs upon him.

This brings to my mind a sad Story which I am loath to tell the World; and yet I know not how to keep it to my self; which is this; That after the King was interred at *Windsor*, his Carcase was removed no body knows Whither. And though some of the King leaders have had great proffers made them by K. Charles II. to discover where he was lay'd, yet could they not be prevail'd upon. From whence some have concluded not without reason, that they had certainly offered such an Indignity to those Sacred Reliques as they were afraid, though not ashamed to own. They that could do thus, would be glad to act that dismal Tragedy over again, since it could not be done upon his Person, would joyfully repeat it on his Posterity.

I have one Motive more to quicken your zeal for the good of the Church, which is this, that it will be an acceptable piece of Service to her Majesty. As we must needs conclude not only from her words, she having positively declared as much in several Speeches, particularly in her first Speech in *Parliament*. And in her answer to the Address of the *House of Commons* upon the account of her Royal bounty to the poor Clergy. Besides these promises which are such a Security as it would be a Crime to question, we are further settled in the Belief of her gracious purposes towards the Church from her Actions, which are the liveliest and truest Images of the Mind. For she hath never professed any other Religion than what is established amongst us. And surely cannot but rejoyce to have that Church saved, in which she her self hopeth for Salvation.

2. It is not enough for you to be well inclined and fully resolved never to vote to the Prejudice of either Church or State, but you must be diligent too, and carefully attend the Business of the House. Remember for what end you was chosen, and what your Countrey expecteth from you. I know not which way you will answer it to your self, if any point should be carried in your absence, to which you could have given a Stop, if you had been in the House. For whosoever doth not hinder a Mischief when it is in his Power, is chargeable with the guilt of it. You cannot but know that the Enemy is very watchful to create Disturbances, and to prevent the Efficacy of all the methods for our preservation; and will not you be as Vigilant to Save, as he is to Destroy us? If you will not, but neglect the good of your Countrey, you may be sure it is the only Crime, which the Dissenters will forgive. If the Affairs of a Nation, and such a Nation as this, do not require your utmost Pains and Vigilance, I cannot imagin what can be of importance enough.

3. I wish that you would be very Wary how you hearken to those that talk much of *Moderation*. Not that I dislike the thing in it self, if only Candour be meant by it; but I have no great Opinion of those, who now cry it up so wonderfully. For I am not Ignorant of their devices. This is only to Stroke you into a gentle Submission to their Wills, and perswade you to stand quietly, till they shall get up and Ride you. We have frequent Harangues in the praise of this Vereue, but the time hath been, when it was not so much applauded; as it is now-a-days; when the Loyal Sufferers for K. Charles the 1st were turned out of their Estates and sent a Begging, when some were Beheaded, and others Hanged for Espousing their lawful Prince's Cause. And their Wretched Pillory'd Writers now shew us Weekly, that their

their *Moderation* (as they fancy their Power) Encreases.

Those certainly were glorious times of *Moderation*, which shewed it self so evidently in Confiscations of Goods, in Banishments and Murders. And notwithstanding the great Encomium's that are bestowed upon it, which perhaps are as many as were heretofore given to Conscience, and both equally regarded, yet we find it is a Vertue which Dissenters think fit to commend solely to the use the Church-Men. For how much soever they pretend to it, they are too Obstinate and Sturdy to go out of their own way, and their Coldness hath made them Stiff and Inflexible.

4. The next thing that I recommend to you is Courage, and unmovable Resolution of mind, not to be concerned for the utmost railing of Dissenters, whose great Talent lyeth that way, without which they are no more able than willing to live, you must not therefore think to escape their Indignation, unless either you or they be very much altered; the former of which I no more apprehend than I expect the latter. You know how many of your worthy Predecessors in a former *Parliament*, they have graced with their Calumny in their Black List. And to make their Malice appear more Frightful and more Agreeable to that of the *Infernal Spirits*, they transformed themselves into Angels of Darkness, and no name would go down with them but that of Legion. This I suppose they gave themselves *in terrorem*, though the Resemblance be far less in their Numbers, than their blackness. I am glad to find your name in the Honourable Company of *Tackers*, which now is become as Illustrious as it was intended to be odious. And truly if you had not had this Mark put upon you, it had been just matter of Resentment; as when the Wits make Libels, the young Beauties are apt to think themselves slighted, if they are left out. I am so far from
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looking upon this as a Reproach to you, that I congratulate you the Honour and Happiness of an Ill-meant Courtesie; And if hereafter you shall meet with more of this kind of treatment, I hope you will not make your self so little as to regard the reflections of such People, which are fit only to be despised, or rather received with thankfulness; For you may remember that the cleanness of a Creature amongst the *Jews* was the great qualification for its being a Sacrifice; The Lamb and the *Turtle* had the Favour of being Slain, but the filthiness of the *Swine* protected them from the *Altar*. Is there any thing more common than for these Whiggs, to call the Friends of the Church and Monarchy by the name of *Papists*? And did not they do so in the beginning of our Civil Wars? One would think that they should be ashamed to use the same Mischeivous Arts again, which they practised in the Memory of Man: So that they do more than seem to want the wit and contrivance of their Fore-Fathers and in comparison with them are meer bunglers in Rebellion. But if they are not ashamed to try to undo us this way, methinks we might be ashamed to be undone by such dull repeated methods of Malice. Nay they are not only fond of the same ways of ruining us, but they will have the same weapons too. And therefore the Infamous Observer bids his Countryman furbish up his Marston-Moor and Edge-Hill Swords and Muskets, to fight their Cause over again. Now, let any Man breathing tell me what other Construction these words are capable of than this, That they have a mind to have another stroke at Monarchy, and whensoever they are reduced to silence then is the time to set about it. For so, the Profligate Author of the Review tells us, when the work of the Tongue is at an end, then that of the Hand begins. Sure he thinks that we are to be

be Frightened with big Words. But perhaps he may find, if ever he make the Experiment, that He and his Party are no more to be Feared, then to be Loved; that the danger is not great, either from the Edge of their Wit, or that of their Sword. Such another ridiculous Blusterer, was that impertinent *Bully*, who wrote a Letter to Mr. *Sacheverel*, wherein he tells him thus, "I cannot but admire at your Courage, who knowing how dangerous a *Villain*, a *Fanatick* is, and how many of them there are (I suppose he means a *Legion*) yet dare thus openly to Scumulate the *Magistrate* against them. It is sure some sign of the Peaceableness of their Principles, and of that Restraint under which their tender Consciences held them, when nevertheless you may walk Night and Day in Safety, though it were so easie a thing to Deifie you after the Ancient manner, and no Man be Wiser. A Notable proof this of their Gentleness, that when they are Angry, they do not turn *Cut-Throats*. It is well for Mr. *Sacheverel* that they are not willing to become *Devils*, that they may make him a *God*. The bare asserting Laws, is such a mighty Provocation to set against them, as the Patience of a Dissenter can hardly surmount, and he hath much ado to forbear trying whether Blood would not cure the Itch of Writing. God forbid that I should provoke these desperate Gentlemen to violent Courses by saying this. All that I aim at is to let them see, that we are above Menaces, and will no more endure to be Hectored, than Wheedled out of our Rights.

5. Though I have taken upon me to put you in mind of these things in General, yet am I loath to meddle in any particular Case, lest that should look more like Authority over you, than either my Inclination or Judgment will allow of. But if you will give me leave to

speak my Thoughts and Desires, I would by no means have you to depart from your Bill against *Occasional Conformity*; which to me seems such a Monstrous sort of Practice, that I wonder how any one that pretends to Sense or Honesty can plead for it. And yet there is a Speech abroad in the World, Compos'd by a *Bishop* in its Behalf; by which he hath not much *Dignified* himself, but he hath *distinguished* himself very considerably. I must beg leave to offer you some few Remarks upon it; not doubting but a less Penetrating Judgment than God hath Blessed you with, can daily find out more and more considerable Faults, than I could perceive with a Transient View. His Lordship saith, "That if he was not fully Convinc'd that the Bill is not for the Service of the Church, but that how well soever it may be intended by some, the Effect of it will be quite contrary, he could not have a Heart, or a Face to speak against it, but would promote it with all possible Zeal. If there were nothing else to commend the Bill to me, the Fury with which it is opposed by Dissenters would be sufficient. For certainly they would not be so Diligent and Careful to find out ways and means to Quash it, if they did not know it to be for their advantage to do so. They could not enter into so Strict, so Unanimous a Combination against it, if there were not somewhat under that Agreement, which is no secret History. For can there be any difficulty in believing what they themselves own, viz. That they would have Power? And doth any one think that if they can get it, they will not make use of it? And if they make use of it, is there any doubt against whom? So that it is plain, that the Bill is of great Concernment to the Church, and therefore those that truly love her should stick close to it, being always mindful of that reasonable Caution which his Lordship hath given them, viz. "If one picks at a great Dike that keeps out the

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“*See*, it will be thought how small a Breach soever he maketh at first, that he designs a total Inundation. The next thing Observable in that Speech, and which indeed is a full answer to all his Arguments against the Bill, is this; That in the same Speech wherein he Pleads for *Occasional Conformity*, he Inveighs bitterly against every Reign since the Reformation, and casts such Blemishes upon them for their Severities, as he Fancies are not easily wiped off. But this is a Work, such as I think in Prudence and Conscience he ought to have left to the *Romish* Writers, from whom it would have come with much less Indecency, than from a *Bishop* of the Church of *England*. And now, if we consider his Lordship's Profession of esteem for the Reformation, and compare it with his Reflections upon all those *Princes* who promoted it, it will not be amiss, if he apply that Clause in the Sentence of the Inquisition, which he Mentions, to himself, *viz.* That when a *Heretick* is condemned, and delivered to the Secular Arm, they Conjure the *Magistrate* by the Mercies of God, and the Bowels of *Jesus Christ*, that no Harm be done to the Obstinate *Heretick*, neither in Life nor Limb; but all this is but Farce, for he is to be Burnt immediately. After this manner doth his Lordship deal with those *Princes* who began and carried on the Reformation; It was a glorious Work wherein God made of use them as his Instruments, but truly they were no great Credit to it; for they were Persons of a Cruel Persecuting Nature, and the Yoke which they put upon the Necks of some *Protestants*, was no less Galling than that of *Papery* which they removed. I would not willingly entertain so ill an Opinion of a Person of his Lordships Character, as to think that he designs to Inflame the Dissenters, and yet it is hard to put any other meaning upon his Words, wherein he tells us, That that the Dissenters are All-

med and begin to put on more Zeal, for they apprehend the Toleration is aimed at, and that how little soever seems to be in this Bill, it is a Step, and will be followed by more, that are kept in reserve till this point is once gained. The next Step may be for their Wives and Children, and so the matter may be carried on till the whole Toleration is broke Through. I am amazed to see a *Bishop* endeavouring to fill Dissenters heads with such Notions as these, That they cannot be kept from power but presently their Wives and Children must be Sacrificed. I suppose it will not be long before his Lordship will be able to shew them Childrens Arms dangling out of the *Tackers* pockets, as in the time of the *Civil Wars* the Vulgar were perswaded to believe brave Colonel *Lunsford*. He needed not to have Acquainted us, That he could not in the general condemn *Occasional Conformity*, when he immediately giveth himself as an Instance, saying, That he himself was an *Occasional Conformist* in *Geneva* and *Holland*. And it would be extremely hard if Dissenters should be Blamed for taking a *Bishop* for their Pattern. But his Lordship knows, that of all Arguments, Example is the Weakest; and when a Man sets himself up, it adds no Strength to it. I suppose he doth not think himself fit to be Imitated in all the Actions of his Life; and I can assure him that there is no small number who think this may be added to some others of his Failings. But supposing that his Lordship was liable to no Censure for his *Occasional Conformity*, when he was abroad, I cannot see of what benefit this will be to Dissenters. For many things are tolerable in an exigence which will look very ill in a Man when he is at his full liberty. Perhaps his Lordship did not think it unbecoming him to do thus in a Forreign Countrey; but yet I hope he would not do so at home, too, though he were in a lower Station in the Church than he is. For it would look

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very odd to see one in a Clergy-mans Habit coming out of a *less perfect Conventicle* and then Vindicate himself by saying, That he continued to Worship God *in his more perfect Church*. And yet after all that hath been said by his Lordship, he is not against the Bill absolutely, but only at this present. For when in a proper time it shall be brought in, he will concur in it heartily. So that he hath only an occasional dislike of the Bill, which he was willing should be dismissed purely for the interest of the Church.

Far be it from me to Tax his Lordship with Dissimulation, as if nothing that belonged to the Church were valuable in his Eyes besides her Revenues; yet I cannot forbear saying, that there are some People in the World who pretend a great kindness for her, but it is only that they may with less Suspicion and more effectually wound her; and we find that to be true, which hath been sometimes reported, *viz.* that Poyson may be conveyed by the shaking of hands, and when Men are to be made Friends. But this by the bye, if it will hereafter be for the good of the Church, to have the Bill passed, I cannot conceive why it should not be so now. If he saith, That this may probably enrage the Dissenters, and it is not advisable to raise Discontents at home, when we have a War abroad; I suppose they will not thank him for this Surmise, or I am sure they will have little reason to do so. For this is telling the World, that they are of so base a temper, that if they cannot have a New privilege conferred upon them they will fall to their old practices. which if it be true, no Rhetorick can make them Blacker than they make themselves, since rather than not gratify their Party, and serve their *petit Interest*, they would undo their Countrey. But it may be his Lordship hath a better opinion of them, and thinks that they will live peaceably, though they should undergoe

dergoe that great unheard of Persecution of want of Power, but is concerned for that uneasiness which they must unavoidably feel upon such severity

But then say I, why is all this care to be had only of Dissenters? what if Church men shall be grieved to see themselves turned out of Offices purely to make room for his Lordship's Favorites? May they be provoked at all adventures and must not their Enemies upon any terms be displeased? Certainly in other Countries the greatest regard would be had to them who are in every sense the best part of the Nation. And I shall not make the least scruple to affirm that Church-men are so with us, i. e. that they are the most Numerous, the most Substantial, and the most Dutiful part of her Majesties Subjects, And certainly it is but ordinary Prudence in a Government, to take heed how she puts it into the Power of those People to hurt her, whom she hath no reason to think have Fidelity enough to serve her. Is there any need of Counsel or Deliberation to know who are fittest to be employed by her Majesty, they who watch for her safety, or they who were always the mortal Enemies of her Family.

But though his Lordship will heartily concur in a Bill for disabling all to hold any employment but those who continue to be in the Communion of the Church of England, yet he cannot agree to a Fine of 50*l*. And that for a notable reason because it is not consistent with the Act of Toleration, to lay a heavy Fine for going to a Meeting tolerated by Law. This, methinks, is a strange assertion, as if it were all one to forbid a thing Simply, and to forbid it to People under such and such Circumstances. As suppose there was an Act of Parliament that should empower all Men to Write in the defence of Occasional Conformity, whensoever they were so minded; But if a Bishop was found scribbling that way,

way, he should be suspended during the Queen's pleasure; would such a proviso be inconsistent with the Act? And besides, his Lordship seems to have forgotten his own Travels in *Holland*, where he knows, that none but such as are of the Established Church there are capable of any Employment in the State and yet their Toleration is in no kind of danger. If this Speech of his Lordships for Occasional Conformity hath had the same effect upon you which it hath had upon several other honest Gentlemen, *viz.* only confirmed you in your good Opinion of the Bill; I hope you will excuse me, if I impart some reasons to you which made me wish well to it likewise.

1. The first reason why I did so, was because I looked upon it as a proper means to prevent confusion amongst us. We have a great many unnecessary and Mischievous distinctions amongst us, such as not only keep our Breaches open, but widen them too. But that which I am concern'd for at present is that of a High-Church-man and a Low-Church-man, which is an evident proof of the evil inclination of the Inventer. I doubt not but I shall be Ranked amongst the former and if I am, I accept of the Title most thankfully, and let any one consult the Author of the History of the Reformation, and then let him make this a matter of Imputation, if he can. In that Book he will find this passage, "Behold the face of the Church of *England*, as it was first settled under Queen *Elizabeth*, the Government of the Church by Arch-Bishops, and Bishops, according to the best and happiest times of Christianity: These Bishops never appearing Publickly, nor Officiating otherwise then in Copes at the Holy Altar. The Priests not stirring out but in Canonical Habits; not Executing any Divine Office but in their Surplices, a Vestment set apart for Religious services in antient times.—The Liturgy conform."

“conform to the Primitive Patterns ; and all the Rites
 “and Ceremonies therein prescribed accommodated to
 “the Honour of God and interest of Piety ; The Festi-
 “vals preserved in their former Dignity, and Celebrated
 “with a Religious concurrence of all sorts of People.
 “The weekly Fasts, the Holy time of Lent, the Ember
 “Weeks, together with the Fast of Rogation severely
 “kept by a Forbearance of all kind of Flesh not now by
 “vertue of the Statute, as in the time of King *Edward*,
 “but as as appointed by the Church in Her publick Ca-
 “lendar, before Her Book of Common-Prayer ; the
 “Sacrament of the Lords Supper celebrated in the most
 “Reverend Manner ; the Holy Table seated in the Place
 “of the Altar ; the People making their due Reverence
 “at their first enterance into the Church ; Kneeling at
 “the Communion, at the Confession, at the Publick
 “Prayers, standing up at the Creed, the Gospels, and the
 “*Gloria Patri* ; and using the accustomed Reverence at
 “the Name of Jesus. Musick retained in all such Church-
 “es, in which Provision had been made for the Main-
 “tenance of it, or where People could be trained up
 “at least to plain-Song. All which particulars were
 “either established by the Laws, or commanded by the
 “Queen’s Injunctions, or otherwise retained by vertue
 “of some Ancient usages, not by Law prohibited. Nor
 “is it much to be admired that such a general Confor-
 “mity to those Ancient usages was constantly observed
 “in all Cathedrals and most Parish Churches, consider-
 “ing how well they were preceded by the Court it
 “self. The Bishops and Clergy had been but ill Profici-
 “ents in the School of *Conformity*, under so excellent a
 “Mistress ; if they had not kept the Church in the high-
 “est Splendor, to which they were invited by that great
 “Example. And in this glorious posture still had last-
 “ed longer, had not Her Order been confounded, and
 “Her

her Peace disturbed by some factious Spirits, who having had their wills at *Frankfort*, or otherwise ruling the Presbytery when they were at *Geneva*, thought to have carried all before them with the like facility, when they were in *England*.

Now all that I desire is, that this factious Humour may not prevail amongst us again, but that the Church may Shine out with the same lustre that She did in *Queen Elizabeth's Days*; whose memory was one while very precious with the Saints. But I am affraid my Lord of *Suffolke* hath by his Reflections upon Her for Security towards them, put Her out of their good graces, and the 17th of November will never more be a Festival. We find by woful experience that our Sectaries are now united against the Church, and are fully agreed to pull Her down; But no doubt if they could gain their point, they would be at a grievous loss what to set up. For Can any one imagine, that either the Presbyterians will Submit to the Independants, or the Independants patiently bear the Presbyterian Yoke? or would they govern by turns? if so, we might have *Occasional Consecration* enough; or shall we have a *Hotch-potch* of Principles mixed together? a Religion compounded of all manner of Perswasions? This, I believe, would be as practicable, as the making one Party truckle to the other. And therefore it is absolutely necessary for the preventing that Confusion which will be otherwise unavoidable; to let things go on in their usual course, and to maintain the Church, the only Pillar and ground of Truth and Peace. And this is no more than what hath been owned by some Dissenters, such as are not High Flyers in Fanaticism, viz. That they do not understand the Art of Government, and therefore think it better that it should remain in the Hands of Church-men. And indeed it seems to me unreasonable that they should now

be deprived of the Administration of Affairs, of which they have been so long in possession, unless it can be proved that they have exercised that power ill. For it is not fair to divest any one of a Privilege, before it be made out that he hath abused it. And whatever failings they have been guilty of through humane Weakness, they are much short of what Dissenters have been guilty of when they were uppermost. For none of those Barbarities were committed by Church-men, when there was nothing to restrain them, but their own good Nature, which the Sectaries pursued without intermission or remorse. For who was ever Banished; or had his Estate confiscated? who was either sent into another World, or into the remote parts of this, purely for Religious sake because he would not comply with the Established Worship? But this Measure hath been too often tickled out to Churchmen; witness those Tragi-comical Stories, which say you may read in *Mercatorius Disputum*; if his Tears do not hinder him. And you have no other way to secure us from the same Cruelty, but by disabling the Whiggs from following their inclinations, so that whilst you contend *pro*, they contend *contra*.

2. Another reason, which made me wish well to the Bill, was because I thought we might thereby be freed from Hypocrisy, which will always stick close to Occasional Conformists. As Polybius said, That the true Cause of War was always concealed; so here the real Ground of our Dissenters Animosity against the Church, is interest, the God which they serve most faithfully. For notwithstanding all their out cries against Popery, yet when they came to be tryed, their Zeal cooled, and they were more favourable to it in K. James the 2^ds time than the Members of the Church of England could afford to bear. For whilst they wrote and lived against it, they (the Dissenters) were more mannerly and complied

plied with the Measures and Designs that were then on foot. And what they unjustly Branded the Father with, they adord in the Son.

If they make Religion their End, I can see nothing to induce us to believe them, but that it is the last in Execution; for there is something else that is first in their intention. So the Out-cry of the *Episcopalians* was, Great is *Diana*; but the Craftsmen that set them on work, were troubled only because they were like to make no more Silver Shrines; The Goddess was talked of, but the income was the Thing that was meant. How jealous did they pretend to be, lest they should be deprived of their Toleration; which neither they feared nor we desired. And now that is secured to them, they must have Offices; and if they be deposed them, they are used Arbitrarily and Tyrannically. *ye* you will imagine them irreparable if you keep us out of their Hands. In the Church of *Rome* the *Lords* sit so absolutely at the Beck of their Clergy, that if a Priest shall say, that such a thing is White, a Layman is bound to believe it to be so, however it appear to him and if the Priest shall afterwards say, that it is Black, he is bound to believe that too though he see no kind of alteration in the thing. And doth not the *Original Confession* all after the same manner, and in Effect say, The Worship of the Church of *England* is Lawful, when there is an Office in the Case; but when there is nothing to be gotten by it, then it is unlawful? Surely when the Test and Corporation Acts were made, the Government that then was never Dreamt of such Hypocritical practices as are now Justified, but thought that they had raised an Impregnable Fortress for the Church, by excluding all such from Civil Offices, as would not pay Obedience to her; not Imagining that Men for their Profit's sake would be really guilty of that Idolatry, of which they falsely ac-

cused.

cused others. Not that I charge all that Party with
 that Crime. For I am very well satisfied that some
 are Dissenters out of Principle, and some out of Inter-
 est. But how shall we be able to distinguish them,
 when we can Judge of Men only by their actions? And
 therefore I should think it most advisable for all of them
 to exclude themselves from Civil Employments, that
 they might thereby prevent all Suspicion and Jealousie
 of Simpler ends, and be looked upon as Men of
 Conscience and Probity. For by this means, what
 they lost in perfection, they would gain in Credit.
 I shall mention but one reason more, as a Motive with
 me to like the Bill, which is this;
 I cannot but believe that you are fully convinced,
 that it will make much for the Interest of the Church at
 Home, that the Bill should obtain; but perhaps you have
 not heard how high the hands in the Church of Foreign-
 ers and consequently how dangerous it will be to cast
 any, the least Blemish upon her, in the present Ju-
 dicial of Affairs. And therefore I will acquaint you with
 their favourable Disposition towards an Uniformity with
 her. The *Bishop of Salisbury* tells us in his *Friemond*
Oration. That some Protestant Churches are
 making great Steps towards a nearer Communion with
 our Church, both in Worship and Constitution; and
 are recommending to all about them a more entire Union
 with us. I am very well pleased with his Lordship's
 Information, for a Reason that you may Guess at, though
 we did not need it. For we have the same Account from
 as good an Hand; what a great Progress the Pious and
 Learned Mr. *Ostervald* and many others hath made in his
 great undertaking of bringing many of the Calvinists in-
 to a Nearer Conformity with the Church of *England*.
 But then how shameful will it be for us, to neglect
 her Interest at home, when we have such Encou-
 rage-

agement

agement from abroad? and whilst Strangers are drawing towards her, we, who pretend to be her Children are falling from her; that she, who is the desire of so many other Nations, shall be the unhappy object of the Hatred and Contempt of her own. All other Reformed Churches acknowledge her to be so. And the truth is, the main of their Enmity, who blame her Constitution is to be imputed to their Ignorance. For she wants nothing else to indear her to all Considerate and Well-meaning People, but to be known. If any of the Members of those Churches shall come as the *Queen of Sheba* did to *Solomon*, to see her Wisdom, but find her so much altered, that they could not know her, by the representations that has been made of her, how Miserably will they be surprized, and how Black shall we appear? This will, as the Bishop of *Salisbury* speaks in another Case, have a strange Sound all the World over, and will be a mighty Discouragement to all abroad.

Thus have I Sir, freely told you my Thoughts not doubting but the Event will prove them to be yours too, and when you come to act as a Member of *Parliament*, it will plainly appear that I have with these Lines drawn your Picture, which is all that was intended by

Your very humble Servant.

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